

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JAKART 10607 041204Z
ACTION EA-12

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FRB-01 INR-10 NSAE-00 TRSE-00 XMB-04 OPIC-06
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INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0664
CINCPAC HONOLULU IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANILA IMMEDIATE

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FOR PGM/RC; VOA; CINCPAC FOR ICA ADVISOR

EO 11652: NA
SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION -- ASEAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

(1) THE INDEPENDENT DAILY SINAR HARAPAN IN AN AUGUST 4 EDITORIAL
ON THE ASEAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE SAID THE PRESENCE OF TOP
U.S. CABINET MEMBERS AT THE MEETING INDICATES THE "INCREASINGLY
IMPORTANT POSITION OF ASEAN TO U.S. ECONOMIC INTERESTS ...

(2) "HOWEVER," SINAR ADDED, "THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE UNITED
STATES WILL QUICKLY BE ABLE TO SHIFT ITS STANCE OR POLICIES TO
FIT THE DESIRES OF ASEAN NATIONS. IT IS NOT A SIMPLE THING
(FOR THE U.S. TO DO) CONSIDERING THAT IT MUST ALWAYS MEASURE
ITS STEPS AND POLICIES IN RELATION TO ITS GLOBAL POLICIES.

(3) "AT PRESENT THE UNITED STATES IS IN A DIFFICULT POSITION
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PAGE 02 JAKART 10607 041204Z

TO FULFILL THE HOPES OF ASEAN NATIONS. ITS INTERNAL ECONOMY
IS IN A CRITICAL CONDITION DUE TO THE LARGE DEFICIT IN ITS
BALANCE OF PAYMENTS, ITS LOW RATE OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND ITS
HIGH RATE OF INFLATION AND UNEMPLOYMENT. IT DOES NOT SEEM
THAT THERE WILL BE MUCH RESULTING IN THE ECONOMIC SECTOR FROM
THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE.

(4) "HOWEVER, THAT DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE DIALOGUE IS WITHOUT ANY VALUE AT ALL. IT IS THE BEGINNING OF A LONG-TERM EFFORT TO ACHIEVE A HARMONIOUS AND BALANCED ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO PARTIES (WHICH IN TURN SHOULD HELP PRODUCE) ECONOMIC GROWTH AND STABILITY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA."

(5) MEANWHILE, TRIBUANA SAID, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF THE NATIONALISTIC DAILY MERDEKA, IN A BY-LINED NEWS ANALYSIS SAID, "THE UNITED STATES APPEARS TO BE TRYING TO IMPROVE ITS STANCE BY MAKING ENCOURAGING STATEMENTS ON ASEAN'S ESCALATING DEVELOPMENT. A(U.S.) PRESS RELEASE INDICATES THAT THE AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION IS BEING EXPANDED TO COVER POSSIBLE COOPERATION IN TECHNOLOGY, EDUCATION, CULTURE, TRADE, INVESTMENT, COMMODITY POLICY, FOOD, AND SEVERAL OTHER ECONOMIC MATTERS. THIS TIME THE UNITED STATES IS SENDING ITS HEAVY-WEIGHT MINISTERS INTO THE DIALOGUE, SECRETARIES VANCE, BLUMENTAL AND KREPS.

(6) "IT HAS BEEN REPORTED FROM WASHINGTON THAT ONE OF THE U.S. PROPOSALS WOULD BE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SO-CALLED U.S.-ASEAN BUSINESS COUNCIL. THIS IS, PEOPLE SAY, LIKE THE U.S. MISSING THE TRAIN...ASEAN ALREADY HAS FIVE GIANT REGIONAL PROJECTS, FOR WHICH JAPAN HAS PROMISED \$1,000 MILLION.

(7) "FOLLOWING THE END OF THE INDOCHINA WAR PEOPLE BEGAN WONDERING WHAT POLICY AMERICA WOULD NEXT PURSUE IN ASIA. NOW, WE SHOULD ASK ONCE AGAIN WHETHER THIS SUPERPOWER HAS UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 JAKART 10607 041204Z

ANY NEW IDEAS FOR ARRANGING ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE REGION. AS WAS THE CASE SEVERAL YEARS AGO, THE CURRENT ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION IS STILL THE SAME: NOT YET*"

(8) SINAR HARAPAN CARRIED A FOUR-COLUMN HEAD ON PAGE SEVEN SAYING "ECONOMIC ISSUES, MAIN TOPICS OF U.S.-ASEAN DIALOGUE." THE STORY IS BASED IN PART ON ICA WIRELESS FILE STORY, "ASEAN MEETING TO BRING ASIANS, AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN TOGETHER."

(9) OTHER PAPERS LARGELY CARRIED STRAIGHT NEWS REPORTS, MERDEKA USING ANTARA'S WASHINGTON DATELINED STORY, HEADED, "PERSPECTIVES ON ASEAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS," PLAYED PAGE FIVE, FOUR COLUM U

ACROSS THE TOP. KOMPAS, A LEADING INDEPENDENT DAILY, WENT TWO-COLUMNS PAGE ONE WITH A HEADING, "U.S. ASEAN DIALOGUE BEGINS; MEETING TO DISCUSS U.S. ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION," AN ASSOCIATED PRESS STORY. ANGKATAN BERSENJATA, THE ARMED FORCES DAILY, USED A REUTER STORY ON PAGE SEVEN, UNDER THE HEAD, "ASEAN DELEGATION HAS PRELIMINARY CONTACT WITH U.S. SENATE." THE ENGLISH-LANGUAGE INDONESIA TIMES CARRIED A PAGE ONE AFP STORY HEADED, "SIX MEMORANDA BROUGHT FORWARD AT ASEAN-U.S. CONFERENCE." ENDUSINFO.

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